



Fact Sheet

18th Wing Kadena Air Base

Keystone of the Pacific

The 18th Wing is the host unit at Kadena Air Base on Okinawa, Japan. It is the largest U.S. military installation in the Asia-Pacific region and the largest composite wing in the Air Force. The 18th Wing maintains combat readiness to support air operations taskings as directed by the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Command, through Pacific Air Forces and 5th Air Force.

The 18th Wing's mission is to defend U.S. and Japanese mutual interests by providing a responsive staging and operational airbase with integrated, deployable, forward-based airpower.

The wing is composed of five groups: operations, logistics, support, civil engineer and medical. The wing provides facilities for US Navy, Marine Corps, Army, and other forces assigned to or transiting Kadena.

Approximately 6,500 military members are assigned to the wing. The total base population of 21,000 from five major commands also includes dependents, U.S. civilians, Japanese base workers, and contractors. The wing manages more than \$6 billion in resources, including 74 F-15, KC-135, E-3, and HH-60 aircraft valued at more than \$4 billion. Other equipment and capital assets are valued at approximately \$2 billion.

Kadena's presence on Okinawa contributes significantly to the island's economy. The base's annual economic impact is estimated at nearly \$700 million. This includes payment of local employee salaries, rent for off-base housing, and contracts with local companies. Additionally, approximately 7,400 Japanese citizens who own land on Kadena receive land lease payments from the Japanese government.



Strategic importance

Kadena operations contribute to regional stability. Approximately 40 percent of U.S. trade is with Asia. Our economy has become interdependent with those of East Asia. Many countries want a U.S. military presence here.

The Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security, signed in 1960, sets the parameters of U.S.-Japan bilateral engagement. **Article Five** addresses response to attack within the territory of Japan.

Each Party recognizes that an armed attack against either Party in the territories under the administration of Japan would be dangerous to its own peace and safety and declares that it would act to meet the common danger that is in accordance with its constitutional provision and processes.

Article Six of the Treaty allows U.S. Forces to use the facilities and areas in Japan for maintaining regional peace and security. For the purpose of contributing to the security of Japan and the maintenance of international peace and security in the Far East, the United States is granted the use by its land, air and naval forces of facilities and areas in Japan. The use of these facilities and areas...shall be governed by a separate agreement.

Leaders of both countries have repeatedly affirmed that the bilateral security relationship, based on the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between Japan and the United States, remains the cornerstone for achieving common security objectives and for maintaining a stable and prosperous environment for the Asia-Pacific region as it enters the 21st century.



Okinawa is known as the “Keystone of the Pacific” because of its strategic location. The island is about 900 miles from Tokyo, Manila, Seoul and Hong Kong and 1,200 miles west of Guam. Kadena’s presence on Okinawa gives it the ability to quickly deploy its more than 80 aircraft throughout the Asia-Pacific region.

Key facts

- Kadena Air Base is the U.S. Air Force’s largest overseas air base in terms of population and assigned aircraft. The 18th Wing is the largest overseas operational combat wing with 74 aircraft assigned and the fourth largest in population in the Air Force.
- Kadena Air Base proper has an area of 4,930 acres along with an additional 6,280 acres for a munitions storage area.
- The 18th Munitions Squadron, one of the Air Force’s largest munitions squadrons operates and maintains a war reserve materiel munitions storage area for the entire Pacific.
- The base has two parallel, 12,100-foot (3,690-meter) runways. Kadena has 1,018 industrial buildings, 1,555 housing-related structures, 15 hardened aircraft shelters, and 25 security revetments.
- The 18th Civil Engineer Group is responsible for all the military housing on Okinawa which totals 8,129 units.
- The 18th Operations Group is vital to readiness and generated 11,500 sorties and 24,000 flight hours in FY 00. One-third of flying activity is conducted off station during exercises and support missions. On average, Kadena experiences about 1,000 takeoffs and landings per month which makes the base the busiest in the Pacific Air Forces.
- An F-15 can carry up to eight air intercept missiles (AIM) including every variety of AIM-9, AIM-7 and AIM-120 advanced medium range air-to-air missile (AMRAM). The F-15C achieved the most air-to-air success during the Gulf War of any combat aircraft.
- The 18th Wing KC-135 tanker aircraft and crews provide refueling or planning support to all aircraft transiting this region.
- The majority of 18th Wing flying occurs between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m., Monday through Friday.
- In the event of a contingency or war, the base becomes a staging area for aircraft from the United States. During this time, the base can accommodate up to 170 aircraft. Additionally, Kadena is one of seven bases in Japan that fly the United Nations flag as part of the United Nations Command Rear (UNC). Kadena’s main role is to provide facilities for UNC aircraft.
- Kadena’s medical clinic sees more outpatients, approximately 650, than any other Air Force clinic.

Kadena demographics

- Active duty: 6,500
- Family Members: 9,200
- Civilians: 1,300
- Japanese Civilians: 3,300
- Avg. Monthly Contractors: 1,000 monthly
- Average age of military members: 30 years old
- Percent of military enlisted: 90%; military officer: 10%
- Percent of enlisted members who are married: 69%
- Percent of officer members who are married: 73%
- Percent of military population who are minorities: 35%
- Percent of military population who are women: 17%
- Percent of enlisted members on 1st enlistment: 30%
- Percent of enlisted members on 2nd enlistment: 20%
- Percent of enlisted members on 3rd or later enlistment: 50%

Average Tour Lengths:

- Married enlisted: 3 years 9 months
- Single enlisted: 2 years 9 months
- Married officer: 2 years 10 months
- Single officer: 2 years, 9 months

Officer Commissioning Source:

- Reserve Officer Training Corps program: 39%
- United States Air Force Academy: 22%
- Officer Training School: 17%
- Direct Appointment/Civilians: 20%
- Other sources: 2%

Units of the 18th Wing and assigned aircraft

18th Operations Group: 6 Squadrons, 2,300 people; conducts the wing's flying mission on and off station.

Aircraft: F-15 (48); KC-135 (15); E-3 AWACS (2); HH-60 (9)

18th Logistics Group: 6 Squadrons, 2,400 people; sustains Kadena Team's combat capability.

18th Medical Group: 4 Squadrons, 450 people; provides medical care to base and joint service personnel.

18th Civil Engineer Group: 2 Squadrons, 1,500 people; performs base maintenance and facilities improvement. Responsible for all U.S. military housing on Okinawa.

18th Support Group: 4 Squadrons, 3,000 people; provides personnel care and services for the base and guests, to include the Okuma Recreation Area, NCO Academy and Airman Leadership School.

Associate units and assigned aircraft

353rd Special Operations Group: Air Force Special Operations Command; supports special operations in the Pacific region. Aircraft: MC-130 (10); C-130 (1)

Commander, Fleet Activities Okinawa: United States Navy; provides logistic support and services to U.S. Seventh Fleet units operating in the Western Pacific Region. Aircraft: P-3 (3 to 10);

Support Center Pacific: Air Force Materiel Command; performs avionics maintenance.

Detachment 15, 372nd Training Squadron: Air Education and Training Command; trains aircraft and equipment maintenance and munitions personnel.

733rd Air Mobility Support Squadron: Air Mobility Command; manages all passenger and cargo aircraft transiting Kadena. Aircraft: C-12 (2)

390th Intelligence Squadron: Air Combat Command; provides critical, near real time intelligence data.

82nd Reconnaissance Squadron: Air Combat Command; conducts RC-135 missions in the Pacific. Aircraft: RC-135 (1 to 2)

Det 3, Air Force Institute for Environment Safety and Occupational Health Risk Analysis: Air Force Materiel Command; provides consultant services and analytical data on environmental issues affecting military and civilian functions in the Asia-Pacific region.

18th Wing Public Affairs Office
Unit 5141 Box 30, APO AP 96368-5141
Tel: 098-938-1111, Ext. 634-1509 Fax Ext. 634-2344
International 011-816-117-34-1509 Fax 011-816-117-34-2344

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